

# ROLL OF HONOR.

It is very gratifying for men and women of to-day to find an ancestor's name on the pension roll of the Revolution. It will be equally gratifying in the future for a man's descendants to find that he was on the pension roll of the War of Rebellion.

ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.

# Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac

A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865.

By WILLIAM SWINTON.

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## COLD HARBOR.

Gallant Attempt to Break through the Army of Northern Virginia and End the War at One Blow—Appalling Slaughter in a Few Minutes—Flanking Resumed.

The Chickahominy can be regarded as a wet ditch in front of the outer fortifications of Richmond. It was therefore absolutely necessary, for further advance upon the line taken up by Gen. Grant, to break the passage of this stream. But it was clear from the development of the enemy's strength that the effort to carry a direct crossing where the two armies faced each other, had little promise of success. It was accordingly judged advisable to extend toward the left and endeavor to pass the Chickahominy below by a movement by Cold Harbor. This place, which, as the point of convergence of all the roads leading whether to Richmond or to White House (now the depot of supplies of the army), was to be considered as a strategic point of the first importance, had been secured after a brisk action by Sheridan's cavalry on the afternoon of the 31st. The same night the Sixth Corps was detached from the extreme right of the army and directed on Cold Harbor, toward which also a body of troops from Butler's command was then en route. On this point explanation may be necessary.

## PORTIONS OF BUTLER'S COMMAND CALLED.

Finding that Butler, after his retirement within the cul-de-sac of Bermuda Hundred, could readily hold his narrow front with a fractional force, Gen. Grant ordered him to form all that could be spared into a movable column and forward it to make a junction with the Army of the Potomac. Accordingly, on the 29th of May, a force of 60,000 men, under Gen. W. F. Smith, made up of four divisions taken from the Tenth and Eighteenth Corps, was embarked on transports in the James River, and after passing down the river and across the Neck, arrived at the mouth of the York River on the morning of the 31st. Here Gen. Smith received orders from the headquarters of Gen. Grant to move on to White House, and on the south side of the Pamunkey (39). It will be observed that a movement on that point must throw Smith completely out of position in relation to the Army of the Potomac, then fronting the Chickahominy—a fact that was sufficiently evident to that officer on his arrival there, on the morning of the 31st, after a long and fatiguing march. It was not until the following morning that he learned from an officer of Gen. Grant's staff that his orders had been wrongly worded—that instead of White House, it was Cold Harbor he was designed to reach, and that in consequence he had made an unnecessary march of 10 or 15 miles. Upon this, Gen. Smith, who was a man of a high order of intelligence, and who, on the morning of the 31st, had reached Cold Harbor, where the Sixth Corps, detached, as already seen, from the right of the Army of the Potomac, had just arrived, at once determined to take position on the right of the Sixth Corps, and directed it with it in an immediate attack (40).

## LONGSTREET'S FIRST LINE TAKEN.

Now, as soon as the Sixth Corps was withdrawn from the right of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Lee, detecting the movement, and suspecting its object, met this maneuver by a counter-movement, and ordered his own left, and directed the Tenth Corps, to cover there any attempt to force the passage of the Chickahominy; so that when Wright and Smith arrived, they found the line of the Army of the Potomac, which they were to meet, was the line of the Chickahominy. The enemy was described in force holding position behind Cold Harbor in a thick line, to reach which it was necessary to traverse an open field of several hundred yards in width. Dispositions being completed towards 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the assault was made very spiritedly, the Tenth Corps advancing over the open space under a very severe fire, and the Sixth Corps succeeding in carrying the first line of the enemy, capturing between them quite impracticable to carry the line, and the troops rested on their arms for the night, after dispositions to secure what had been gained. The casualties in this action were severe, being upwards of 2,000 men in the two corps.

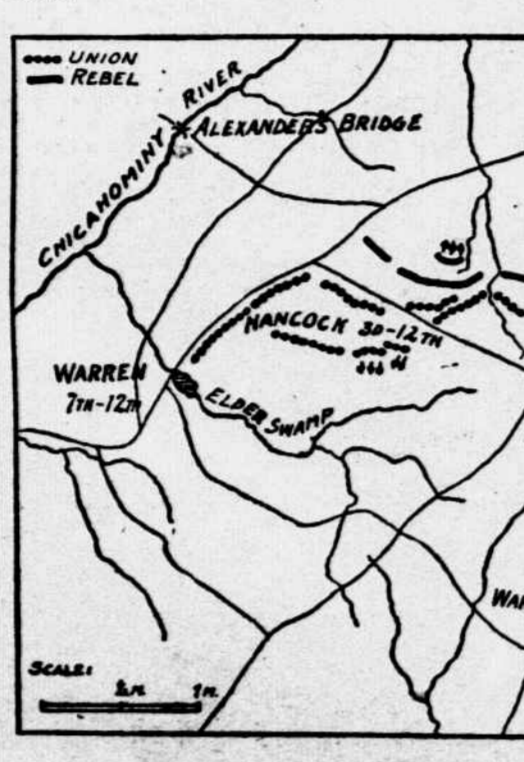
## WARREN'S LINE PENETRATED.

Great as was the loss in this action, it secured the possession of Cold Harbor, which was indispensable to hold; for Gen. Grant had determined with the Sixth Corps to retire within the intrenchments of Richmond. Hancock's Corps, which was on the line of the Tenth Corps, formed the right of the army, and directed that night from its position, and directed the left of the Sixth Corps continued near Bethesda Church, and though holding a line excessively long (nearly four miles in extent), there was still an interval between the Tenth and Sixth Corps. To close this interval, Warren's division was directed by Gen. Meade to extend his left, while Burnside's command was to right, and to take position on the right of the line, and move the right and rear of Warren. When Warren, during the afternoon of the 2d, was in the act of executing this movement, the enemy, detecting the movement, and perceiving that the Tenth Corps was in the act of moving, drove Burnside's skirmish line through a swamp, capturing many, and then penetrating through Warren's line of battle, and his skirmish line, cut off and took prisoners about 400 men. This sudden attack of course put an end to Warren's contemplated extension to the left, and compelled him to act on the defensive at once, to avert any possible disaster. The enemy's ally was, however, not made with much vigor, and was readily repulsed by

Barlett's Brigade. Dispositions were made by the Fifth and Ninth Corps for the battle which was determined on for the morning.

## OLD-TIME POSITIONS OF ARMIES REVERSED.

Cold Harbor, where Gen. Grant and Meade established their headquarters for the impending passage at this point, is no harbor, as the name might imply, for it is quite inland; (41) nor is it even a center of population, nor so much as a collection of farm-houses, but a mere locality, having all its importance from the convergence of roads there. Behind it runs the Chickahominy, and the map will reveal that we are here again on classic ground; for it is here that the battle of Gaines's Mill, the first of the series of actions in McClellan's retrograde movement across the Peninsula, was fought. As the lines were now drawn, however, there was this difference, that the relative situation of the combatants were quite reversed—Lee holding McClellan's position and Grant Lee's.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF COLD HARBOR.

Lee disposed his force on the higher side of the Chickahominy, in an excellent position for defense, having the front of approach obstructed by thickets and cut up by marshes. The Union force was drawn up in the order already given—Hancock's Corps on the left, the Sixth Corps in the center, and Smith's command on the right. The left rested on the Dispatch Station road, the right on the road to White House. Hancock's Corps, which was on the left, was divided into two divisions of horse held the lower crossings of the Chickahominy and covered the roads to White House. The other cavalry division under Wilson took post on the right of the Sixth Corps, and the main body of the army was drawn up in the order already given. The morning of the 3d, the Sixth Corps, then Smith's command, then Warren and Burnside on the right. The left rested on the Dispatch Station road, the right on the road to White House. Hancock's Corps, which was on the left, was divided into two divisions of horse held the lower crossings of the Chickahominy and covered the roads to White House. The other cavalry division under Wilson took post on the right of the Sixth Corps, and the main body of the army was drawn up in the order already given.

## SLAUGHTER WITHOUT GAIN.

Hancock held the left of the whole army. His attack was made by the division of Barlow on the left and Gibbon on the right, with Birney supporting. Barlow, formed in two lines, advanced, and found the enemy strongly posted in a sunken road in front of his works. From this, after a severe struggle, the enemy was driven back, and followed into his works, where several hundred prisoners, a color, and three guns were taken. The guns were immediately turned upon the enemy, forcing him to retreat in confusion from that part of the line. But this partial success was speedily turned into a reverse; for not only did Barlow's second line fail to come up to the prompt support of the first, but the enemy, speedily reformed, forced Barlow's troops out of the captured works. They fell back, but not to their original position; to a position far in advance of the position from which they had moved forward, and from 30 to 75 yards from the enemy, where, taking advantage of the ground, they covered themselves in an astonishingly short time.

## EVERY ASSAULT A DISASTER.

The story of the advance of the Sixth Corps on the right of Hancock, and that of Smith on the right of the Sixth, is of a like tenor. Every assault was immediately repulsed, and the enemy's position remained unchanged. The Tenth Corps, which was on the left, was divided into two divisions of horse held the lower crossings of the Chickahominy and covered the roads to White House. The other cavalry division under Wilson took post on the right of the Sixth Corps, and the main body of the army was drawn up in the order already given.

repulsed most disastrously; and to retain possession of an advanced position, more or less close to the enemy's line was the utmost that could be done.

To the right of the Fifth Corps was strung out a line so thin and extended, that beyond holding its own, it was hopeless for that corps to attempt to do more. The Ninth Corps made an attack at the hour ordered; but Gen. Burnside got two of his divisions round in position to assail the enemy's left flank, and by noon had won a bridgehead across the eastern end of the Shady Grove road. This force warmly engaged the enemy. The batteries of the corps worked sufficiently far round to the right to make the Confederate position at that point very difficult to hold, and by afternoon Gen. Burnside was prepared to assail the enemy's left. Long before that time, however, the action had been suspended.

This action was decided, as I have said, in an incredibly brief time in the morning's assault. But, rapidly as the result was reached, it was decisive; for the consciousness of every man pronounced the result as final. The troops went forward as far as the example of their officers could carry them; nor was it possible to urge them beyond; for there they knew lay only death, without even the chance of victory. The completeness with which this judgment had been reached by the whole army was strikingly illustrated by an incident that occurred during the forenoon. Some hours after the failure of the first assault, Gen. Meade sent instructions to each corps-commander to renew the attack without reference to the troops on his right or left. The order was issued through these officers to their subordinate commanders, and from them descended through the wretched channels; but no man stirred, and the immobile lines pronounced a verdict, silent, yet emphatic, against further slaughter. The loss on the Union side in this sanguinary action was over 13,000, while on the part of the Confederates, it is

blood. And although the illustrious valor of the Army of the Potomac more than once plucked victory from the jaws of hell, and bayoneted an unyielding enemy in the very embrace of its citadel, the Union commander was never able to crush his opponent, who, thrown again and again in the mighty wrestle, each time rose quickly to his feet. Poised in the air to force a direct issue, Gen. Grant, at the end of each combat, initiated a movement to turn the hostile front; and these flanking operations created such much address—throwing the Confederates successively out of the positions in the Wilderness, before Spotsylvania, on the North Anna, and along the Pamunkey. Thus, by battles and marches, the army, in 30 days and 30 nights, reached the Chickahominy.

Now, it will be observed that each of these turning movements, up to the Chickahominy, though grossly repeated, each leap to the objective of all its efforts, Richmond. But, once before the Chickahominy, the series of flanking operations was exhausted; for any additional move would have been to the army not forward, but away from Richmond. If, therefore, it was designed to push the advance by the line on which the army was now positioned, on which Gen. Grant had declared he would "fight it out, if it took all Summer," (44) it was absolutely necessary to force the passage of the Chickahominy. The result of the battle of Cold Harbor, fought on the 3d of June, was to show that this line could not be carried by a coup de main.

## OVERLAND CAMPAIGN REALLY ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING.

But as the alternative was either to force a crossing of this stream or abandon the line of operations altogether, Gen. Grant's first intention was to transfer the army to a point on the coast. The results thus far accomplished on the former line would appear to justify his primal choice. As to losses—GRANT'S OVERLAND MARCH. The overland campaign was a successful either in the destruction of Lee's army or the capture of Richmond, and as that line of operations was at length abandoned, the gross result seemed to be confined to whatever loss, material and moral, had been caused the opposing army. But it is not possible to measure aright this loss, unless it be considered in its relations with the cost at which it was purchased.

In this regard, it must be considered, the balance was very much in favor of the enemy. Grant's line of operations, from the Wilderness to the Chickahominy, reached the enormous aggregate of 60,000 men put hors de combat (45)—a number greater than the entire strength of Lee's army at the opening of the campaign. He had inflicted on Lee a loss of 20,000—the ratio being one to three (46). The Confederates, elated at the skillful manner in which they had constantly been thrust between Richmond and the Union army, and conscious of the terrible price in blood they had exacted from the latter, were in high spirit, and the morale of Lee's army was never better than after the battle of Cold Harbor (47).

44. "I propose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all Summer."—Dispatch of May 11, 1864.

45. I append a statement of casualties in the Army of the Potomac in the battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor. Wilderness, May 5 to 12—Killed: Officers, 209; enlisted men, 3,010. Wounded: Officers, 1,071; enlisted men, 18,291. Aggregate, 20,410.

Spotsylvania, May 12 to 21—Killed: Officers, 107; enlisted men, 2,052. Wounded: Officers, 250; enlisted men, 5,897. Aggregate, 20,410.

North Anna, May 21 to 31—Killed: Officers, 144; enlisted men, 1,561. Wounded: Officers, 421; enlisted men, 8,921. Aggregate, 13,133.

Cold Harbor, June 1 to 10—Killed: Officers, 144; enlisted men, 1,561. Wounded: Officers, 421; enlisted men, 8,921. Aggregate, 13,133.

Total casualties, officers and enlisted men, 64,842; missing, 9,564. Total casualties, officers and enlisted men, 64,842; missing, 9,564. But to this must be added the casualties of the Ninth Corps, which, up to the battle of Cold Harbor, was independent of Lee's command. Counting these 5,000, or thereabouts, and the losses of the other corps, we obtain an aggregate of above 60,000 men. It will be observed that the loss in officers was especially severe, reaching 1,000. These were generally the flower of the officers of the Army of the Potomac, the bravest of the brave men whose loss to the army was irreparable.

46. In stating the casualties of the Confederates army at 20,000, I place the aggregate somewhat higher than that obtained from the Confederate sources of information to which I have had access. Gen. Lee's Adjutant-General, in conversation with the writer, gave 18,000 as his impression of the loss. This number corresponds remarkably with that derived from the official reports of the Army of the Potomac, after the battle of Cold Harbor. The former was 52,623, and on May 31 it was 52,623. The difference being somewhat above 8,000. But means that the Confederates' accessions to his strength—7,000 men under Pickett, from Petersburg, and 1,000 under Breckinridge, from the Valley. This would make his loss, up to Cold Harbor, 17,000; and adding 1,000 for the casualties of that battle (an over-estimate), we obtain an aggregate of 18,000.

47. I have until lately taken a different view of the condition of Lee's army at this time, inferring that the severe strain to which it had been constantly subjected must have shamed its morale. My first writing touching this part of the campaign, I used the following language: "There was one result of a purely moral order that sprang from this campaign, that has without doubt, a considerable influence on its issue. The very recondite influence of this campaign, which Gen. Grant dealt his blows, and sacrificed lives to deal these blows, seemed at length to the enemy the aspect

# The National Tribune

It does not follow, as a matter of course, if a man was a soldier, even if he is a pensioner, that it will be an easy matter for his widow to get a pension. As a matter of fact, widows' cases are unnecessarily delayed, and in some cases never allowed for lack of evidence, which the husband, usually, could have supplied during his lifetime.

This important matter has been discussed, from time to time, in the columns of The National Tribune, and has been made the subject of orders by Commanders-in-Chief of the Grand Army, but every appeal heretofore was deficient in one important feature: no safe and permanent place was provided for the custody of the information.

The National Tribune Co., in a practical way, proposes to supply this deficiency. In a fire-proof room, in its own building, and under lock and key to insure privacy, it will care for such papers and information until such time as they may be needed, even if such time is many years distant. The National Tribune Co. is incorporated. Having a perpetual existence, the death of the present managers of the Company will not disturb the business or change the custody

of the papers. No safer place in the world can be found for the purpose.

But The National Tribune will go further in this commendable work. It will assist in getting in shape the proofs and information required. The first step for every comrade is to answer the few simple questions that are printed below under the heading "Preliminary Report." This report will disclose the case and enable The National Tribune to complete all the proof required.

There will be no charge whatever for this service, but it will be expected of every comrade that he will call the attention of at least one other married comrade to this matter and influence the other comrade to do likewise. No other missionary work among comrades can be productive of more good. Many comrades who are not subscribers to The National Tribune will not learn of this important service if subscribers do not call their attention to it. Extra papers will be sent for distribution upon request.

Comrades who attend to this matter promptly will be taking the best possible step toward securing for their widows the higher rate of pension: that is, \$12 a month instead of \$8.

## Preliminary Report

To aid my widow, if I leave one, in getting her pension.

NOTE.—This report is short, and can be easily written out on letter or legal cap paper. This course avoids cutting the paper. Be sure to write the names and dates clearly and distinctly. When report is ready mail it to R. W. Shoppell, Attorney, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C.

Date....., 1904.

Soldier's Name....., P. O. ....

State..... I was in the service from..... day of....., 186....., to

the..... day of....., 186....., as a.....

and was honorably discharged at....., on the..... day

of....., 186..... Are you a pensioner?..... At what rate? \$..... per month.

(Yes or no.)

Were you pensioned under the old law or the new?.....

(The new law is the act of June 27, 1890.)

What wounds, diseases or disabilities, if any, are written on your pension certificate?.....

I was married to..... on the..... day of.....

18....., by..... at.....

(Give name of clergyman or person officiating.)

At marriage my age was..... Her age was.....

Is there a public or church record of this marriage?.....

Were either of you previously married?.....

Remarks:.....

(If remarks are of considerable length they should be written on a separate sheet of paper.)

## All About the New "Age" Order.

### THE LAW OF JUNE 27, 1890, AND THE NEW "AGE" ORDER.

The laws of June 27, 1890, and May 9, 1900, provide for a pension, according to degree of disability, from \$6 to \$12 per month for any soldier of the War of the Rebellion who served 90 days and was honorably discharged.

The new "AGE" Order simply says that any claimant who has arrived at the age of 62, or 65, or 68, or 70, is presumed without further proof (and, inferentially, without examination) to be suffering disability sufficient to warrant \$6 a month pension at age of 62; \$8 a month at age of 65; \$10 a month at age of 68 and \$12 a month at age of 70.

### To Those Who Have Never Applied for Pension.

The estimate is that there are 162,000 soldiers of the War of the Rebellion who have never applied for pension, and that the majority of them are over 62 years of age. We urge upon these comrades that it is their duty to apply. If many are so well-to-do that they do not need it, they can apply the money to help those who do need it. A pensioner contributes to the prosperity of his neighborhood. Every dollar he draws and puts into circulation serves the whole community before it finally goes back to the Treasury. The pension list is really a Roll of Honor. Under this "AGE" Order an application can be made that, in most cases, does not involve examination, which probably removes a feature that was objectionable to many.

Write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed you without cost.

### TO GENERAL LAW PENSIONERS DRAWING LESS THAN \$12.

If under the law of June 27, 1890, as construed by the New "AGE" Order, which is given elsewhere, a pensioner will receive an increase, he should write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed him without cost.

### TO PENSIONERS UNDER THE ACT OF JUNE 27, 1890, WHO ARE RECEIVING LESS THAN \$12 PER MONTH.

Read very carefully the new "AGE" Order given in another column. If it allows you more pension than you are now receiving, write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed you without cost.

### TO REJECTED CLAIMANTS.

Any one over 62 years of age whose claim, under any law, was rejected should write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed him without cost.

### TO THOSE WISHING TO ALLEGE MORE DISABILITY THAN IS PRESUMED BY THE "AGE" ORDER.

The "AGE" Order presumes and allows that a claimant is half disabled for manual labor at the age of 62; two-thirds disabled at the age of 65; five-sixths disabled at the age of 68, and wholly disabled at the age

of 70. If the claimant can not show that he has greater disability at these respective ages than is recited above, it is of no use for him to describe his ailments. It is a disadvantage, in fact, because it will incur the expense and delay of medical examination. If a claimant is in fair health for his age, it is useless to apply for more than is allowed by the "age" order.

Any one, however, who is sure that he is more disabled than is allowed for by the "AGE" Order should write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed him without cost.

## Widows.

Upon the death of your soldier husband, apply for pension promptly. It is one of the provisions he leaves for your maintenance. In most cases the pension will commence from date of application. Something is lost by delay. Write to R. W. Shoppell, or The National Tribune, Washington, D. C., and a proper blank will be mailed him without cost.

### OTHER CLASSES OF CLAIMANTS.

We are prepared to prosecute all kinds of claims other than those already referred to. Write us briefly about them.

### ADDRESS.

Do not write long letters, and address answers and all correspondence to R. W. Shoppell, or THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, 339 Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

front, in every case where, by this means, a position may be carried (48). Moreover, this was the means by which, eventually, after a heavy waste of life, the enemy was dislodged from these lines. It results that such assaults were vain; and the cam-

condition of the opposing armies and their commanders. Whatever was done after that should have been done to accomplish the ultimate result aimed at. This, however, was of a double nature—to destroy Lee's army, and to capture Richmond, covered by that army. The latter could not be effected by a carefully considered combination and direction of force. When the hostile army had succeeded in engaging itself within such intrenched lines as those of Spotsylvania, the North Anna, and the Chickahominy, the chances of dealing an effective blow were meager indeed; while assaults, under such circumstances, were attended with a sacrifice of life enormous on the part of the assailants, and slight on the part of the defenders. The only possible result to be gained by such attacks was, therefore, the forcing of the enemy from his position.

BETTER TURN THAN ATTACK A POSITION. But this might have been done without loss by a simple turning movement, and the principles of war admonish the use of this means in preference to an attack in

39. Gen. Smith's Report: Order from Gen. Grant, dated Hanoverton May 28. The precise terms of the order to Smith were quite peculiar; for he was ordered to "hold the road from Cold Harbor to Bethesda Church (Warren's) and to cooperate with the Sixth Corps in an attack." As Gen. Smith's force was insufficient even to fill this space of over four miles, he abandoned the attempt to comply with the first part of his instructions and resolved to execute the second—that is, attack.

41. Many interpretations of Cold or Cold Harbor have been given. It has been suggested that the proper form is "Cool Harbor," a designation which its shady coverts might justify. But it would appear that "Cold Harbor" is a common name for many places along the traveled roads in England, and means simply, "shelter without fire."

42. Hancock: Report of Cold Harbor.

43. This phrase, "as far as the example of their officers could carry them," I take from the Report of Gen. Hancock. It is true of the whole army, and to those who witnessed that terrible slaughter, will have an almost pathetic significance.